

BE HAPPY!



VALUABLE **ADVICE ON HOW TO** GAIN
HAPPINESS; TORAH THOUGHTS AND
INSIGHTS DEALING WITH JOY AND
CONTENTMENT IN LIFE.



BASED ON THE TEACHINGS OF
RABBI NACHMAN OF BRESLOV
AND OF HIS STUDENT
RABBI NOSSON OF BRESLOV

הכתובת להשיג את הספר הקדוש הזה וכל ספרי
אדמו"ר מוהר"ן מברסלב זי"ע וספרי תלמידיו הקדושים

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Be Happy!

1.

To be happy is to be redeemed. Through joy, you free your soul from all kinds of inner problems, both physical and spiritual.

When the Messiah will come, bringing with him the ultimate redemption, joy will spread throughout the entire world. Then "You shall go out in joy, and be led forth in peace. The mountains and hills will burst forth into song before you, and all the trees of the forest will clap their hands" (Is. 55:2).

Joy takes away our problems. Joy gives us strength to bear whatever troubles we may be going through. As Isaiah said of the future Joys of Redemp-

tion, "Strengthen the hands of the weary, make firm the knees of the tired.... Tell the easily frightened, be strong, do not fear.... G-d's recompense will come, and will save you.... And those saved by G-d will return and come to Zion singing, and eternally joyful. They will attain happiness and joy, and their sorrow and troubles shall flee" (Is. 35:4–10).

The prophet says as well (Is.61:10), "I will truly rejoice in the Lord; my soul will be glad in G-d." When will I truly rejoice? "In the time of the Messiah" (Pesikta 38). The happiness then will be so great that everyone will dance from sheer joy, and no one will be embarrassed by what his neighbors may think of him. G-d will reveal so clearly the truth of His existence, that every person will feel that there is absolutely no one else at all, besides G-d Himself, and that He is always at every person's side. There is no greater joy a person can experience as the realization that G-d is right beside him. How fortunate is the person who awaits that hour – how happy is the person who attains this realization.

2.

Happiness is a fire burning to ash all the impurities in a person's system and in the entire universe. The greater the degree of joy you attain and the more you truly rejoice, the more will you obliterate the obstacles which stand between G-d and yourself.

Inside of you the evil inclination strives to prevent you from being happy. It will even persuade you to avoid being joyful out of a false sense of piety. Your evil impulses dissolve the moment you become happy. Therefore, your evil inclination plays on your conscience in order to drive the joy out of you. It makes you feel guilty over past misdeeds and convinces you of how difficult is the road of return that lies ahead.

The whole world is trapped by this way of thinking. Everyone assumes, that in order to approach G-d, one must follow a routine of self denial and personal suffering that takes a great deal of time and ef-

fort. Rabbi Nachman, however, revealed to us that the only way to achieve closeness to G-d is through constant happiness. Rabbi Nachman explains; G-d, whose presence surrounds and fills the entire world, dwells only in a place of joy, for "Joy and gladness are in His place" (Chr. 16:27). Because a person's thoughts indicate where he truly resides, therefore, to be close to G-d one must think of Him. Depression dulls the mind causing a person to lose control of his thoughts, so he cannot think of G-d. As soon as he is happy, he is elevated to a place of joy, which is, the place of G-d, because he is thinking of Him.

Some think that when Rabbi Nachman spoke about joy (see Likutei Moharan II: 24) he meant it as a mere religious devotion. Others believe that it was just a suggestion, but not essential in serving G-d. In truth, a person's closeness to his true Jewish identity, and in fact, a person's very existence, both physical and spiritual is dependent on the amount of joy he can attain. You can not reach any degree of holiness, in serving G-d, without first fulfilling the obligation of

being joyful.

Besides, the happier you are the wiser you will become. Each and every day has a central theme that is unique for that day. By being happy you will be able to understand the underlying theme associated with each day.

4.

Don't be ashamed to be happy. G-d's commandment to be happy is the purpose of all holiness. The level you can attain in fulfilling G-d's other Torah commandments, depends on the level of happiness you reach.

The Holy Ari'zal, who lived in Israel four hundred years ago, revealed to his students that he reached his high level of holiness, as a result of concentrating on being joyful before fulfilling a G-dly commandment. He experienced more joy, than a person would feel were he to acquire all the treasures of

the earth.

Unfortunately, the majority of people are not happy. They are afraid of others opinions about themselves. Therefore, you must apply the opening lines of the Shulchan Aruch, (the Code of Jewish Law) to the commandment of joy. "Do not be embarrassed before the mockers, and certainly do not squabble with them" (Orach Chaim 1:1; and Be'er Heytev).

The more effort you put into being happy, the more optimistic and confident you will become. Your mind will expand and each day will be filled with new and wonderful insights. Take advantage of this opportunity by being happy.

6.

One of the main reasons why a person is not happy is because he dwells on the past and is anxious about the future. As a result he is always full of wor-

ries.

Even if someone shows him what a wonderful thing happiness is, and he wants to begin to rejoice in G-d, he still thinks that he will not be able to keep this up all the time and therefore decides to stop trying.

Advice for those with such a negative attitude, was offered by Rabbi Nachman – in his explanation of the verse, "If you will listen to His voice today" (Ps. 95). Rabbi Nachman suggested that a person should always focus only on today, "I have only today" (L.M. I:272).

So why worry about the past? And how much more absurd to worry about the future, if today is your only day.

Create joy for yourself. Dance or sing or do at least one thing every hour that makes you feel joyful. Continue to increase it, until very soon, your whole day will be filled with happiness. This way you will

be able to achieve your purpose in life, both physically and spiritually. Joy is a person's existence, so do whatever works for you in order to be happy the whole day. Revive yourself by bringing to mind all the good points you possess. Above all, remember, that you are a Jew! This in itself is definitely a reason for happiness. The greater the happiness that you experience, the more you will be filled with spiritual holiness and succeed in everything. This is because happiness is the essence of a human being, both spiritually and physically. It is his essence in both this world and the World to Come.

It may be that you are immersed in depression and bitterness as a result of the troubles and weaknesses caused by daily circumstances. Your situation may even be terrible to the extent that you think all hope is lost. Still, you must not let your situation get to you, continue to strive for joy, and life will improve.

Deal with your situation, without comparing

yourself to others. Comparison causes a person to be confused and depressed. Instead, concentrate on clinging to G-d and giving Him satisfaction from yourself. Being close to Him will bring you continuous joy.

7.

Happiness is the highest level a Jew can attain. Precisely because it is so high, it is harder to reach than any other spiritual level. So often a Jew's heart is engulfed in bitterness which tears him away from the highest level of holiness – the commandment of joy. You can reach joy only when you devote your entire consciousness towards that goal. Do whatever may be necessary to grasp it, even though at first it may seem silly.

The goal is to be happy. The path is total commitment; and your journey proceeds only when you ignore those who ridicule you.

8.

The world is so used to sadness and bitterness that these seem to be an irrevocable part of the human condition. With these feelings as a basis, people construct entire outlooks on life. Some people, for instance, say that we should walk around feeling sad because of our sins. However, these theories are none other than the strange and bitter fruit of the evil inclination. The evil inclination is mankind's enemy in both the physical and spiritual arenas. It embitters a person even though his circumstances do not warrant such bad feelings, and he has no reason to feel so low.

And so Rabbi Nachman of Breslov, a true spiritual master, dedicated his life, in the midst of this confused era before Messiah's coming, to battle this inclination and completely eliminate it, and to reveal that all the arguments used by it are false and without substance. His goal was to make clear to everyone that depression is the Side of Evil itself. His aim was

to show that there is only one path for a person to truly leave behind the darkness and harmful passions which bind him down. That path is the road of happiness and joy.

Be happy and rejoice in G-d, and you will emerge from your troubles and darkness. Thus, will you eliminate the evil inclination which now blazes within you. This is so, because joy is the source of holiness and purity.

9.

Problems are attracted to a person who is depressed and filled with bitterness. This poor attitude further breaks his spirit and fills his mind with paranoia and fears.

However, if you decide to fill yourself with joy, by doing whatever you can in order to accomplish this – even to lift your feet and dance in joy – all judgments against you will be removed. You will no

longer feel the pressures of your conscience. Then your mind will relax, your heart will fill with strength and you will have no fear of anyone but G-d. You will stand firmly on the foundation of life both physically and spiritually. That foundation, is to have no fear or apprehension of any creature or occurrence in the world.

Rabbi Nachman said, "Strength is based in the heart" (L.M. I:249). When your heart is strong, you fear no man and no event. You can achieve awesome tasks and win great victories, because of the strength and power in your heart. You have no fear at all, but rather, valiantly face life's challenges.

10.

If one feels bitterness and depression, he should be aware that he is still far from G-d. G-d is the very essence of joy, and depression does not exist in His presence. Therefore, transform your sorrow and mourning into joy. Then you will actually ascend,

and be next to G-d. The more you rejoice, the closer you will come to G-d, for everyone's spiritual progress is measured in relation to the amount of joy he has achieved.

11.

Once you accustom yourself to being happy, it will be easy for you to fulfill all of G-d's commandments. This is because the cornerstone of all G-d's commandments, is the commandment of joy, "To rejoice in the Lord." As Rabbi Nachman said, "When a person carries out a commandment joyfully, it is a sign that his heart is with G-d." (Sefer Hamidot Joy:1)

Indeed, to such a degree can joy expand a person's awareness that it opens the gates of heaven so that all worlds are revealed to him, as cited before in the name of the Holy Ari'zal.

12.

"Rejoice in the Lord and be happy, righteous ones; and sing, all you straight-hearted" (Ps.32:11). What is complete joy? What is really called joy? It is when you fill yourself with happiness and with an awareness of G-d. The entire world is filled with His Glory. His presence fills every space, surrounds everything, and is within all universes. There is no reality at all besides Him.

Even in the lowest and farthest places you can find Him. This is the essential teaching of our Rabbis who reveal G-d's Presence to us and enlighten us to the nature of G-d's existence. With this knowledge, we come to thank and praise G-d, singing to Him with gratitude and joy. Fortunate is the person who sees such joy!

13.

Joy will open gate after gate in the spiritual halls

bringing you to an even closer attachment to the Creator. The more you rejoice, the more you will merit that yet more gates will open before you, and that the sweet and pleasant divine lights will shine upon you. This is the light that illuminates all the worlds, as Ezekiel proclaimed (Ez. 34) "And the world shone from His light."

No one can experience a pleasantness so sweet as one who clings to G-d. This is a pleasure both true and eternal, without any limits. Fortunate, then, is the person who is always happy, to whom the gates are open that he may cling to his Maker.

14.

Happiness is the source of holiness; depression the root of uncleanness. Therefore, do the utmost possible to always be full of joy. You will thereby increase the flow of holiness to yourself and eliminate the force of impurity.

Do not turn from joy, for even a second, because if you do, then depression can gain control of you. It is then extremely difficult to escape its influence. Make every effort to act as though you are joyful, for this acting will in itself bring you to joy.

15.

"Humble ones, hear and rejoice" (Ps. 34).

Only by being humble can you rejoice. The main barrier to joy is pride which cuts off G-d's Presence. Our Rabbis said regarding the proud one, "He and I (G-d's Presence) cannot dwell in the world together" (Sotah 5a).

But if you nullify yourself by admitting that you have no knowledge, and that you are as small before G-d as a shard of clay, then, and only then will you merit continuous joy.

The Prophet Isaiah said "Fear not, O worm Jacob.... I will be your help, says G-d" (Is. 41:14). If

you make nothing of yourself and see yourself as lowly as a worm, then, and only then will you hear the voice of G-d's Presence, which is the joy of Israel.

The more you nullify your will and the less you seek to rule over others, the more will the light of joy shine on you.

16.

Happiness is the means by which you can receive great wisdom, for joy expands the mind, it raises your consciousness, strengthens your heart and refines your senses.

The foundation therefore, in serving G-d is joy. Without happiness one has no ability to receive holiness and knowledge, no light or true life. You forfeit the chance to see life in its true colors.

17.

The more you rejoice, the higher is your true inner status. All of a Jew's service to G-d, whether it may be learning, praying or performing *mitzvot*, must bring him to happiness. As long as he does not rejoice, his service is lacking because he has not yet fulfilled the commandment to be happy. The only way one truly fulfills all of G-d's commandments is if it brings him to rejoice in G-d.

G-d is united with His Torah and with the commandments He gave us. When a person studies Torah and fulfills the commandments for the sake of doing G-d's will, his heart will flame with joy. He will gain both physical and spiritual pleasure of fulfilling His commandments. He will realize that by wearing *tzitzis* (the four cornered fringed garment), donning *t'fillin* (phylacteries) or by lighting *Shabbos* candles, his soul is illuminated with the light of G-d's Presence, which is clothed in the words and letters of the Torah.

Is there a joy in the world comparable to this, to knowing that you are fulfilling the will of the King of kings – the Holy One blessed be He?

18.

G-d can only be apprehended by reducing and simplifying G-d's characteristics into terms we understand. This can be accomplished by the human mind only through joy.

Therefore it is most natural and expected that the Side of Evil attempts to remove each individual from the virtue of joy. It knows that through joy even the most lost or debased person can rise to approach G-d, that even the lowest can emerge from the darkness which hides G-d's light from him.

If you really desire to enter the gates of holiness, and truly wish to abandon the wastelands into which you have strayed – if you really yearn to reach G-d – then use all your strength and utilize all your might to

be only suffused with joy. Do whatever necessary to bring yourself to continuous joy.

19.

What is the essence of joy? It is to believe in G-d, to know that He is the Creator of all; to know that there is none else than He, that all was made only by Him, and is dependent on nothing but Him. The more you realize these essential truths, the more true joy will fill your being; and the more your heart will flame with joy. This basking in the divine illumination is the very essence of true pleasure and delight.

20.

Happiness contracts and constructs funnels, and channels G-d's Light so that it will reach even the smallest and most fallen; even the most lost and most pitiable. These people too can serve their Maker on their level. And so, whatever level you may be at this moment – even be it low, degraded and fallen –

strengthen yourself to tremendous joy. As a result G-d's Light will shine on you right where you are. Then you will rise from your lowliness and desperation.

All depends on joy. In proportion to your efforts to maintain constant happiness, so do you create a vessel to receive the spiritual luminescences, and revelation.

21.

Although G-d protects, helps and saves a person, many times he is not aware of it.

As our Rabbis say, "The person to whom a miracle occurred does not realize it" (Nidah 31a).

Why is that? It is because a depressed person's heart is twisted and embittered. Even in the very hour that G-d helps and saves him, he can feel nothing.

But if you soul rejoices in G-d at all times, and if

you truly know that there is none else but He, then you will truly rejoice in His salvation. As King David says, "And my spirit will be glad in the Lord, and will rejoice in His salvation" (Ps. 35:9).

Fortunate is the person who can rejoice in G-d to the point that he feels at all times how G-d is protecting him. Happy is the person who praises G-d with his every breath.

22.

Remember, true joy stems from faith: to believe in G-d and to know Him. This is every individuals source of true life, each according to how much his level and understanding allow him to attain. The greater your awareness of G-d, the greater, then, is the amount of joy allotted to you. Only this is true joy, because it is an outcome of your cleaving to G-d. "For in Him will our hearts rejoice" (Ps. 33:21). Our rejoicing will only be in Him, for other than this, there is no joy. How can this be explained? No

mouth can speak it, no pen can write it and there is no way to describe it. Only your heart can experience this truth, by trying your utmost to fulfill G-d's commandments with true joy.

23.

Always remember to rejoice in G-d. Always remember the many good points that you possess and in particular, the fact that you are Jewish. What does your being Jewish mean? Our Rabbis say, "Whoever rejects idolatry is called a Jew" (Megillah 13a). You are a Jew, chosen to carry out the Torah's commandments. You are a Jew – that is your true eternal joy, a joy which cannot be touched or tampered with. It isn't that you chose to be a Jew, but rather you were born a Jew – G-d chose you! The joy within this fact can sustain you all your life. The more you rejoice, by remembering that "G-d has made me a Jew," the more do you draw the holiness of Judaism into you and the happier you will feel.

By rejoicing in the fact that you are Jewish, you reveal to G-d your heart's yearning for Him. You reveal that you believe in His Oneness; that He fills and surrounds all worlds; and that there is no existence besides Him at all.

24.

Once you are accustomed to always being joyful, people will be drawn to you as metal to a magnet. Most of the people in the world are filled with bitterness and sorrow. People are confused and they see no path to guide them from their confusions. But when they see a Jew with a glowing face, a radiant person, they naturally flock after this person to hear his ideas and advice on how to escape their own troubles and problems. Hence, besides anything else, happiness gains you many friends.

25.

Devote your entire being to the acquisition of

joy. Do not allow depression to rest within you even for a minute. Resolve to become a better person, and regard depression as a transgression!

Many people make this resolution and their hearts burn with a powerful yearning to be joyful, yet afterwards they fall into a depression. This is because they lack the patience necessary to attain completion. Therefore, do not force the process. Rather, wait patiently. As our Rabbis say "He who comes to purify himself is helped, – but he is told "Wait" (Yoma 38b). In that period of waiting, be very strong, don't get discouraged no matter what happens. Wait and hope until your day of salvation comes.

A great follower of Rabbi Nachman once said, "What should one do while he waits? He should pray much to G-d, speak to Him using words natural to him, dance and bring himself to joy. Even though the time may pass and it seems that nothing is getting done, don't be discouraged. Your day of salvation will surely come".

26.

Through joy your mind expands and you truly become a free person. The majority of people are slaves – to their jobs and to their passions – all because of their depressions. And so do all in your power to make yourself happy. Dance and be glad, be joyful and sing, make music and listen to music – all to rejuvenate yourself as much as possible.

When you embitter your soul and break your spirit by meditating on all the wrong you have done, you are not helping yourself at all. On the contrary, this only strengthens the Side of Evil, which feeds on bitterness and depression. These negative traits can all be wiped out only with gladness and with joy. The more you rejoice, the more will you render powerless these tools and weapons of the Side of Evil, and the more you will illuminate the darkness.

G-d Himself is the source of joy. When you rejoice, you are at G-d's very side. Fortunate is the one

who can rejoice and be happy always!

* * *

RABBI NACHMAN'S SAYINGS

Gevald!!! Never give up hope.

It is forbidden for one to give up hope.

Hisbodedus (meditation) is a very high level. In fact it is above all other levels.

If you believe that you can destroy, believe that you can rectify.

Know, that a person walks in life on a very narrow bridge. The most important rule is not to be afraid.

Even when things appear to be at their worst, it can instantly turn around for the best.

A person for the pleasure of a quarter of an hour can lose his portion in this world as well as in the World to Come.

When asked, "What is in reality the power of choice?" the Rebbe answered, "Simple. If you want, you do, if not, not. Too many people are trapped in the customs of their habits, but if they truly want to, they can easily overcome".

Although the Land of Israel appears to be as ordinary as any other land, nevertheless, it is very great and awesome in its holiness. The same is true of a righteous man. He appears as others do, yet his inner being is completely holy and different from the average man.

Concerning war that takes place between nations, Rabbi Nachman remarked, "See how wise and intelligent these people are, constantly thinking and planning to invent the ultimate weapon that can in one moment wipe out thousands upon thousands of peo-

ple".

Faith may be on the lowest level, but only through faith one can attain the highest of all levels.

The main mitzvah that is entitled "doing" is the act of charity.

A student was once complaining to Rabbi Nachman about his lack of accomplishment in serving G-d. He said that he wanted very much to serve G-d. Rabbi Nachman said to him "Do you truly want to desire? With true desire one can reach everything".

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